

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 057493

TOSEC 504

USMISSION NATO FOR HARTMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: NATO, PFOR, UR

SUBJECT: V-E DAY CELEBRATIONS IN EASTERN EUROPE

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REF: A. STATE 035348 B. PRAGUE 0458 (NOTAL)
C. BUCHAREST 0497 D. SOFIA 0363 (NOTAL)

1. DEPARTMENT IS MOVING AHEAD WITH GENERAL PREPARATIONS FOR EXCHANGES OF VETERANS GROUPS AND NAVAL VISITS BETWEEN THE US AND USSR IN COMMEMORATION OF V-E DAY (REF A AND PREVIOUS). DETAILS AND ANY FURTHER MEASURES WILL BE PROVIDED FOR NATO POLADS' CONTINUING EXCHANGE ON V-E CELEBRATIONS. DISCUSSION THUS FAR AND INFORMATION REPORTED FROM POSTS CONCERNING LOCAL PLANS HAS BEEN HELPFUL.

2. OUR OVERALL OBJECTIVE IS TO PARTICIPATE IN CELEBRATIONS IN WAY THAT WILL ENSURE RECOGNITION OF OUR CONTRIBUTION IN THE WAR, AVOID OFFENSE TO THE FRG, PROVIDE A MEANS FOR CO-ORDINATING OUR ACTIVITIES WITH THE ALLIES AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT OUR POLITICAL RELATIONS WITH EACH COUNTRY INVOLVED. THE BEST WAY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS IS TO ADOPT A SELECTIVE POLICY SUITED TO THE INDIVIDUAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF EACH COUNTRY IN EASTERN EUROPE. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN EVENTS ON GERMAN TERRITORY IS CLEARLY OUT.

3. FOR PRAGUE. WE AGREE (REFTEL B) THAT RECOGNITION SHOULD BE SOUGHT FOR THE SUBSTANTIAL US ROLE IN THE LIBERATION OF WESTERN AND SOUTHERN BOHEMIA. IT WOULD SEEM APPROPRIATE, FOR THE CZECHS TO INVITE (AND PAY EXPENSES FOR) US VETERANS OF THE LIBERATION TO TAKE PART IN A US-CZECH WREATH-LAYING CEREMONY IN BOHEMIA. THE LIBERATION OF THAT PART OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA WAS AN AMERICAN SHOW, AND THERE IS NO REASON WHY OUR CONTRIBUTION SHOULD EITHER BE IGNORED BY THE CZECHS OR SHARED WITH THE SOVIETS.

4. DEPARTMENT APPROVES DELIVERY BY EMBASSY PRAGUE OF TEXT OF NOTE IN REFTEL B. IN RAISING SUBJECT OF WREATH-LAYING, YOU SHOULD SUGGEST THAT MFA GIVE THOUGHT TO INVITING US VETERANS. (IF CZECHS SHOW INTEREST, WE WILL MAKE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS).

5. FOR EMBASSY BUCHAREST. US NAVAL VISITS (REFTEL A) WILL MOST LIKELY BE TO NORTHERN SOVIET PORTS, THEREBY RULING OUT POSSIBLE STOP IN CONSTANTA AS SUGGESTED REFTEL C. IF ROMANIANS SUGGEST THAT A VISIT BY US VETERANS OF THE PLOESTI BOMBINGS
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WOULD BE DESIRABLE IN ORDER TO EMPHASIZE US ROLE IN WORLD WAR II, YOU MAY RESPOND IN GENERALLY POSITIVE TERMS. IN ROMANIAN CASE, HIGH VISIBILITY US-USSR CEREMONIES SHOULD BE AVOIDED.

6. FOR EMBASSY SOFIA. DEPARTMENT AGREES WITH REFTEL D THAT THERE IS LITTLE BENEFIT IN CALLING ATTENTION TO WESTERN WAR-TIME ROLE IN BULGARIA ITSELF. WE UNDERSTAND THAT USIA IS

DEVELOPING MATERIALS ON THE US ROLE IN WWII IN GENERAL AND
IN RELATION TO SPECIFIC COUNTRIES, INCLUDING BULGARIA, FOR
ASSISTANCE IN PREPARING EMBASSY DISPLAYS. (DEPARTMENT REQUESTS
THAT TELEGRAMS ON V-E PREPARATIONS AT POSTS BE SLUGGED FOR
USIA/IEE.)

7. BEGIN FYI. STATE 051905 (NOTAL) REPORTED APPROACH TO
DEPARTMENT MARCH 5 BY YUGOSLAV MINISTER-COUNSELOR CONCERNING
GOY CELEBRATION PLANS AND INTEREST IN INVITING FOREIGN DELEGA-
TIONS, PARTICULARLY FROM US, USSR AND UK. MINISTER-COUNSELOR
WAS TOLD THAT DEPARTMENT WILL TAKE NOTE OF YUGOSLAV PLANS.
END FYI. INGERSOLL

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